Dear Pearl, 10/5/72

Sometimes I'm undiplomatic by accident, from tiredness, aftigue or carelessness. More often it is for a purpose, right now to try to get your attention. You really have not been paying attention, and you say something astoundingly immature for an experienced (as the risk of accusation of male chauvinist piggery) newshen. That first:

"...how come a CBS newscaster said on the radio as Nixon was dining on shark's fins in China: Let's face it, Nixon made a great concession overlooking the quantity of drugs produced by China, which is the largest in the world.""

I don't even care who the newscaster was (and thay have some farout nuts of the most extreme right field on their "Spectrum" feature-I heard two in succession not much after 5 a.m. today while I was shaving, and from Chicago yet!), the simplest answer is that he was just plain wrong. Does an experienced reporter have to be told that with the best intentions, which I would not ordinarily assume on a political story so grossly wrong and overtly prejudicial, this is everyday?

I'm much troubled by what is happening to you and to your thinking. Thus I did not ask you to take my word for any of this. I sent you a large assortment of different sources all uncontradictable and all saying the same thing, perhaps 3/4 of the world illicit supply comes from the Golden Triangle and NONE from the new China. If you understood the political philosophy that prevails there you'd know it has to be as close as antyhing can be to an impossibility. Much the same is true of Cuba, and all I've sent you says this, too. Now not one source that I've used is pro-Communist, pro-China or pro-Castro, is it? Some have been tested as few ever are. Example:McCoy's publisher submitted his ms to the CIA for refutation. When they proceeded after this knuckling-under, you know how little the CIA could or did say.

Pearl, you could pull that innocent gal reporter stuff, without the blinking eyes, on someone who doesn't know better, but for me you are too mature to go for this kind of foolish thinking, and that tells me it is NOT thinking. Not for the Pearl I think I know at least THAT much about. Naive? Hell, no; not in this case. I'm about as naive and trusting as they come, regularly putting myself in a position to be conned, but there is a limit. Trusting people is one thing. Not thinking at all is another. So, I deduce you are being and have been hoodwinked. Blink those li'l ol' gals eyes all you want, I am not blinded by their attractiveness and I know they are in a damned good head. I'm not even trying to figure out why because I reached (dangerous method, admitted) an instinctive conclusion before and I've no time to just sit down and puzzle it out. Besides, enough is obvious so that if it isn't the whole answer, it is enough.

And about that you are very defensive, whether or not you so intended. Striso.

Pearl, I'm going to be 60 soon. In all these years I've learned how dependable my judgement is and that the few blunders are pretty big and, in retrospect, not often justifiable to myself. I formed an impression of Striso early enough and clearly enough for him to go away and leave me entirely alone. Besides, in the work I do I have to make spot determinations. Then, too, I draw upon an experience that lets me type people without conscious thought. He immediate fit a classic mold that nothing since has made me give <u>any</u> thought to changing. I could gove you so many examples from your own letter(s). From this one on The Watergate Caper,"The Democrats picked up some stuff re Pigs (meaning Bay of) and the JFK killing which you have been working on. We may have a break in this election...." Rubbish! If they had picked up the impossible, the ONE place it would NOT be is in party hq and in O'Brien's or the state-liason's offices. More, what makes you think this was a simple bugging operation? Know how few people that takes in a pro operation, how little front money (and we are dealing in $$$ with a minimum of $124,000, easily $350,000)? This was a much larger scheme in which even the now-admitted robbery was still a small part. That also doesn't involves such still-large sums. I could go further but stop with this reminder: only the radical-right and the most dedicated Nixonians are peddling that childish line. What is Striso the "liberal" doing with it? You should hear Buckley on it. I enclose it so you can, and I've marked it to make it easier. Aside from the lies (one underlined, other double-marked, the complete implausibilty of this sample of the output of the Dept of Disinformation can fall <u>completely</u> apart before the unsophisticate (which ain't you) by comparing with fact. "The McGovern people are not, <u>then</u> were not and never have been in the WG. Then their offices were near the capital, and were the separate object of attention, according

all sources, including the indctment itself. When McG established national hq, theyx were and are at 1910 K St., NW (whole top of envelope address to me by an official of it enclosed).

This is radical-right/intelligence operation garbage, not anything better. It is stupid, so I believe the intelligence part is from its right-wing part, aimed same area, as its use shows. The radical right wants to believe this kind of stuff. Only nuts could.

You have not answered me on the utter impossibility of an independent Striso having any kind of "contact in Red China". That he puts it this way is self-disclosure, too. Face it, kiddo; he can't.

As I could perceive immediately, you affirm, "And this is what Striso has been feeding me." Pearl, Pearl, you are like a hotpants teenager who believes every sweetnothing she is told to get her into bed. God the kind of stuff you credited and still credit!

So, I ask you again, and in interets in which yours predominate, I'd like to see everything he has been feeding you. If you want any of it confidential and you do let me see it, please so mark. I'd recommend xeroxes, not originals, be sent. And I think if you don't want to get really loused up in a merchantable property that could also be one of other merit, you'll do it. I noted some of the rubbish in the RD piece, remember. Also, I'm doing something else I would not, ordinarily, do without asking you first. I'm sending a copy of your letter to friends who are more that merely experienced reporters and trusted friends but experts in the area in question, including being authentic experts on China, old and new, and this includes the language and the leaders (also old and new). With a carbon of mine. If they disagree with anything more than a typo, I'll let you know pronto. It will go out tomorrow and by the end of next week I'll have an answer. If you don't hear from me before the end of the following week, you know there is <u>complete</u> agreement. Depending on the nature of the answer, I'll send you a copy.

Please listen to poppa and stop worrying me!

And whaddaya mean, "<u>If</u> I ever write a book on Kaplan..." I don't think from what I saw of the Asinof touch the theft plus Kaplan will make a movie. I haven't changed my mind on a novel being the best approach, or non-fiction written like a novel. And you get closer to this in what I like, "from the viewpoint of a first person girl reporter visiting Kaplan in prison." Slight reformulation: not "girl" and not mother of two teenagers and not mature woman reporter. More like a young woman reporter, romantic herself, seeing romance in this grisly stuff and weird people, sympathetic to all the villainous heroes and heroines (not exclusing the courva), and with the most explicit understanding of the heat, of all the bodies, and never leave Joel's pants. You can carry the message, the responsible writing and approach, best on this story by jazzing it up with all the commercial touches. And with the whore/second wife, make her beautiful inside and out, if she's neither. Write it as you say in part in "fun essay". Junk the essay and make enough to live on for a while. When you detach yourself, when you are comfortable (as you were not the first day here, your are exquisitely deft, charming in expression, and very, very funny. Remember I told you on the Cortes thing if you couldn't do it any other way, you should have an audience like me and a tape recorder? Write this book that way, like you were telling it to an appreciative audience and without thinking that any act or word could be an embarrassment to you. Use the words that sell today and people use in conversation now. (Our letters crossed on the Playboy thing, but I think I sent it in time for you to have gotten it by 10/1.)

The question you ask about court costs is one I've not solved. I have it in many cases, from publishers to wholesalers to truckers, and I thin at least three publishers. Law and justice are for the rich only. However, your agent ought to be of use here. Trouble is they have more than one client and have to sell to publishers, as I also learned. I ~~have~~ had one who gave up $3,500 without a whimper instead of doing what he owed me. But I'd ask Franz Furst and see what he says. Has he offered any opinion on the story, or does he know it only from the RD piece, whether or not revised?

If the book goes, you've got better prospects for recovery of damages. I think.

I think it is wrong to try to sell a mag piece, esp. now. I think the thing to do is write the book, or about 20 pages of it and then outline. Yes, I think if you write the book with a woman's mind, emotions and touch, a woman's mag will go for it. The whore is

perhaps a bit daring at first blush (blush?) for such a market, but I think that if you could organize it with a chapter on her, as she sees and feels, it would include a number of socially useful things, including inherent commentary on the Merican penal system and a very controversial thing in this country, in-jail heterosex. I think it would sell, Especially when they have cheapened themselves to the point where they have naked, centerfold men. I really would try to organize the book so that one or more chapters can be lifted right out for mag use. This whole business could go here, including on TV. Jials and their problems, including sex, are much and often in the news and considered by sociologists and others. Offhand, I don't think you want to appear about the time their book does. If it gets attention, then the market possibilities will be better. If it gets attention, the lawyer may also be more interested (who is he?).

Despite your problems, you can do the book right now and, the other things you can do to make a living. If you organize yourself and your work. Won't be easy, esp. if the stuff you do is tiring. But you can. Best bet is something based on which Furst can get you an advance. Plan your book and write the opening.

You are right on not seeing Joel after the escape. And you don't have to solve it. It can titillate the reader. You are right in concentrating on Vidal, but not at the expense of the Kaplans. Treat V as though there is no doubt he is alive. Anyway, have you are solid reason to believe otherwise? No corpus delecti. And write the book to make a movie. If you mentioned getting in touch with Playboy, as I seem to recall, suggest not. If you had on paper what you could put there so beautiful y I know two people I could approach in NYC, from the movie end if Furst doesn't work.

Put your head together on this. You've got what the Asinof rewrite can't, and you are aware of it to a degree from this letter alone. This is by its nature the kind of story that lends itself to honest commerical writing, that is, there is no conflict between honesty and what is commerical, and no artistic or hournalistic compromise necessary. It is a rare natural. Even your notes could be part of the text in a first-person tale. Your problem, aside from outting it and yourself all together, will be modesty. This is a lusty story, a bloody story, a cruel story, and an authentic story of intrigue. It is more, but what the hell more do you need except a prod in the right place and the belief that you really can overcome your multitudinous problems? Or, ~~xxxxxxx~~ confidence and self-confidence, ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ both of which you lack for no good reason except, perhaps, the conditions of your life, which may include some you impose.

Your last sentence is"The Times is no longer interested in its stringer here since a much larger investigation is being made." If you mean by this more than the feds have pretended to make, I'd like to know all that you know. If you haven't time anyw other way, please borrow a tape recorder. It can be important. Mitchell made a big mistake in a personal attack on the owner of the Wash Post (he also called her Katie); and the fink-hack judge has been excessive in trying to stifle all comment, including political and press, from my brief conversations today with a number of reporters on his yesterday's decision.

Pearl, with no immediate responsibility for the kids, this is your golden year. Don't waste it by seeing only negatives. Bothing is impossible with the kind of material you have. Kaplan etc is but one. Grab the boots and PULL.

Best,